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## DISCUSSION

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### DISCUSSION OF PROFESSOR GILLIN'S PAPER

E. FRED EASTMAN, REPRESENTING THE DEPARTMENT OF CHURCH AND COUNTRY  
LIFE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN BOARD OF HOME MISSIONS

Mr. Eastman writes: I will state briefly my remarks on Professor Gillin's paper, at the meeting of the American Sociological Society in Washington, last January.

I had no criticism of the paper to offer, but wished instead to raise a question or two. I said that the Presbyterian church had realized the need of rural surveys, that it was awake to the critical condition of rural communities from the social and religious standpoint, that it was anxious to contribute its share to the revival of these communities, and that for three years it had been collecting information about the present economic, social, educational, and religious conditions of some half-dozen states. I then raised this question: What is the best usage to which we can put the survey information already collected?

The members of the society were very good in offering suggestions, the chief of which was that we publish the reports. (Since that time we have published several of the reports.) Regarding some definite follow-up system for improvement in the communities surveyed there was no suggestion offered.

I cannot remember whether or not I raised this second question during the discussion of Professor Gillin's paper, or while talking to some professors after the meeting had adjourned: Give us a workable definition of a community. By workable I meant a definition that could be conveniently used by field men and which would be a compromise between the theoretical definition and such practical definitions as townships or minor civil divisions used by the government for its collection of statistics. The answers to this question were not satisfactory, as few seemed to realize the practical difficulties that are met on the field by those who are making the surveys.

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### DISCUSSION OF PROFESSOR DOWD'S REPORT

MAURICE PARMELEE, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

This report is very interesting as showing the different ways in which the beginning course in sociology is being taught. It seems to me, however, that we ought to go back of this course to something even more fundamental. It has been suggested a number of times recently that it would be well to have a general course in social science which would be introductory to the courses in all the social sciences. My experience in teaching the beginning course in economics as well as in sociology has shown me that most students lack an